

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Interim – May-December:
1292 Sadler Way Rm. 323
Fairbanks, AK 99701
907-452-1088



Session – January-April:
State Capitol Rm 500
Juneau, AK 99801
907-465-3004

Representative Will Stapp

District 32: East Fairbanks, Fort Wainwright, Badger

Rep.Will.Stapp@akleg.gov

March 21, 2025

Sponsor Statement for HB 14 (34-LS0211\A)

Although housed in Division of Healthcare Services, the Division of Public Assistance (DPA) is responsible for administering the Catastrophic Illness and Chronic or Acute Medical Conditions program. In FY21, FY22, and FY23, the DPA has collectively processed thousands of applications and only two qualifying applicants that did receive assistance within the year of 2021.

The program began in 1986. Recipients were mainly those too young for Medicare and with incomes too high to qualify for Medicaid. Those who were either not covered by health insurance or whose insurance was inadequate to brace a catastrophic illness event without endangering their financial resources, subsistence and essential assets. Due to the expansion of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act put into effect within Alaska in late 2015, the increase in coverage for Medicaid recipients grew nearly 145,000 people. Since that time, the number of qualifying recipients has dramatically declined to the numbers we see today.

As a statutory program, the division was administering CAMA program until FY 24 costing the state over \$150,000 a year. Funding for the program was discontinued in the FY25 budget and remains unfunded in the FY26 budget. The division had also provided countless hours of administrative work that would alternatively have been used to process applications for more utilized programs within their division such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to prevent backlogs in assistance funding. The Catastrophic Illness and Chronic or Acute Medical Conditions program has since become obsolete and House Bill 14 aims repeal the program from state statute.